



December 2008

Surprise, surprise!! We're actually early for Christmas and you're hearing from us with a family letter for the second time this year!! This Christmas we thought we'd do something a little bit different. See how many questions you can answer about our year.

1. At work this year, Chris got: A) a promotion, B) a transfer, C) fired, D) laid off or E) none of the above.

Answer: E) none of the above is the correct answer. Chris has continued his work as the Assistant Field Office Director for the DHS/ICE Chicago Field Office. While there may be a promotion or transfer in the future, we don't anticipate any firing happening.

2. Which of the following ideas was discarded for this year's letter? A) wait and send an Easter letter in 2009, B) have the dog write the letter, C) skip the letter altogether or D) send a letter even though you heard from us in 2008 already.

Answer: All but D. Trying to write the letter from the dog's perspective didn't go over well and there was no way we'd skip the letter altogether! We actually had a nice response to our Easter 2008 letter. Many people liked the idea; however, we only have all family members home for a limited time this year. Hence, we took our family picture while all are home and are sending our letter out now instead of waiting.

3. Where did Chris and Cindy go for their anniversary trip? A) Amsterdam, B) the Grand Canyon, C) Paris, D) Alaska, or E) Ireland.

Answer: B) The Grand Canyon is the correct answer. Chris had been to every state except Arizona so we went to the Grand Canyon. He can now say he's been to all 50 states (plus Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Marianas). The Grand Canyon was incredible and we managed to have a wonderful time together even though Cindy greatly missed Kaitlyn, who was only about 5 months old at the time. We've already been to Amsterdam and Paris for anniversary trips. Future anniversary trip plans include Alaska, Ireland, New Zealand and Australia.

BONUS Question: How many years have Chris and Cindy been married?

Answer: Chris and Cindy celebrated 21 wonderful years of marriage in May!

4. We moved our 5 boys to: A) tents in the backyard, B) the garage, C) the basement or D) the pop-up camper.

Answer: C) the basement is the correct answer. While we did acquire a pop-up camper in August, we decided our winters would be too cold to make the pop-up the boys' bedroom. Ditto with the garage and the tents in the backyard. The basement, while cooler than the rest of the house, was really our only option. Now the basement play area doubles as a dressing area with 5 armoires kept in it and the bedroom's triple and double bunks handily accommodate all 5 boys. We are thankful to have a friend who was able to build the triple bunk for us! Now, the second floor belongs to the 4 girls. They've enjoyed spreading out a bit!

5. We bought a pop-up camper because: A) why not? B) opportunity knocked, C) we were miserable tent camping in July or D) all of the above.

Answer: D) all of the above is the correct answer. Truly, the opportunity to purchase a pop-up camper in excellent condition with air conditioning just fell into our laps. We could not pass it up, especially considering the miserable camping trip in July! In

October we were able to camp in our pop-up and it was wonderful. We didn't even have to use the AC since it was cold that weekend. We look forward to more camping trips in what we affectionately call our "Pop Tart."

6. How many months did Matthew actually live at home this year? A) 12 months, B) 5½ months, or C) none.

Answer: B) 5½ months is the correct answer. Matthew spent over half of this year away from home. From March 29 through August 15, he volunteered at the International Alert Academy (IAA) working with the ALERT Cadet program and then with the QUEST program. After one month home, Matthew left again on September 15 for the IAA to participate in ALERT Basic Training Unit 40. Matthew's been home with us since November 16, and we're trying to make the most of our time with him. He leaves again on January 2 for more ALERT training and will not be home until May 30. It's been an adjustment having him coming and going, mostly being gone. Yet, we know that God has called Matthew to this training and we look forward to all that God will teach him through it.

7. Where did our family travel this year? A) Nashville TN, B) Greenville SC, C) Grand Havens MI, D) Warren Dunes MI, E) Owasso OK, F) Big Sandy TX or G) all of the above.

Answer: G) all of the above is the correct answer. Yes, we made all of these road trips as a family this year! In late May, we went to Nashville for our annual home school conference. From there, we traveled to Greenville, SC to visit with Cindy's mom and step-dad. July found us camping with our church family in Grand Havens, MI. Warren Dunes, MI is where we camped in October. We journeyed to Owasso, OK to visit with Chris' dad in mid-October and then in mid-November we made the trek to Big Sandy, TX for ALERT Unit 40 Advancement. It's definitely been a busy year as we hit the road for all of these events!

8. Who is our most curious and adventurous child? A) Micheal, B) David, C) Heather, or D) Kaitlyn.

Answer: Trick question... Micheal and David are probably the most adventurous and energetic right now but Heather and Kaitlyn are probably the most curious. Heather is extremely intelligent and thinks she can do anything her siblings do without help and without asking permission. Kaitlyn, who has been walking along furniture and standing without aid for some time, is beginning to explore her world and learn so many new things. We are all enjoying watching Kaitlyn's curiosity as she grows and explores!

9. What decreased by 2 and then increased by 1 this past year? A) the number of pets we have, B) the number of vehicles we own, C) the number of students in our home school, or D) the number of computers in our home.

Answer: C) the number of students in our home school is the correct answer. We still have one pet, two vehicles and three computers. We did, however, graduate two students, Meghan and Matthew, last spring. This fall, Heather began doing her schoolwork. She is having fun and doing really well thus far!

10. How many of our 9 children got glasses this past year? A) all 9, B) 5, C) 2, or D) none.

Answer: B) 5 is the correct answer. Meghan and Sarah got reading glasses. David got glasses but doesn't need to wear them all of the time. Nathan and Stephen, however, got glasses that they pretty much have to wear all of the time and they're wearing them in our family picture!

So, how did you do? Aren't you glad we gave you the answers?

At this time of year we think of the love God has shown toward us and we are thankful for the friends that He has placed in our lives. Our hope is that you will make Christ the center of all your Christmas celebrations. Further, may He be at the center of your daily life.

Our email address and website are all listed below. We'd love to hear from you and about all that God is doing in your lives! We hope you had fun with this year's letter.

Have a very blessed, worshipful Christmas!

With love,

The McDaniels

Chris, Cindy, Meghan, Matthew, Sarah, Nathan,

Stephen, Micheal, David, Heather, and Kaitlyn

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[HOME](#)